

she

Shines™

SPECIAL 2009 ● FREE

celebrating the aspirations and accomplishments of women

WOMEN OF ACHIEVEMENT

promoting solutions to improve the lives of women, girls and people of color

- Mary-Kim Arnold
- Tracy C. Baran
- Lisa Bergeron
- Paige Clausius-Parks
- Karen Feldman
- Yvonne Freeman
- Ana Giron
- Margaret Murphy
- Nancy Rafi
- Kathleen A. Taylor
- Clarice L. Thompson
- Valerie Tutson
- Donna Walsh
- Shanna Wells

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

fall program insert

published by YWCA Northern Rhode Island ● volume 5, number 3 ● www.sheshines.org

share it
trust it
smile

2009 Metcalf Award for diversity in the media

honoring women of achievement

YWCA Northern Rhode Island recognizes outstanding women promoting solutions to improve the lives of women, girls and people of color

Fourteen women were recognized for their exceptional skills promoting solutions to improve the lives of women, girls and people of color at the 5th Annual Tools of the Trade Luncheon, held September 30 at Kirkbrae Country Club in Lincoln. Deb Ruggiero served as the event emcee.

Congratulations to the 2009 award winners. YWCA Northern Rhode Island appreciates the underwriters and attendees celebrating the following Women of Achievement: Mary-Kim Arnold, Tracy C. Baran, Lisa Bergeron, Paige Clausius-Parks, Karen Feldman, Yvonne Freeman, Ana Giron, Margaret "Digit" Murphy, Nancy Rafi, Kathleen A. Taylor, Clarice L. Thompson, Valerie Tutson, Donna Walsh and Shanna Wells. See page 6. For additional details, visit www.womenofachievementri.org.

EVENT UNDERWRITERS

shining

**CVS Caremark
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smile

Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch: I'm privileged to congratulate all of the exceptional women being honored this year and am especially pleased that Ana Giron, the director of the Department of Attorney General's Victim Services Unit, is among them. Ana is to be saluted for her leadership in delivering a multitude of services to crime victims and their families.

Leading Women of Southeastern New England: Through Lisa Bergeron's stellar work, women in our

region have been inspired and empowered to enhance their leadership skills and build successful careers. This benefits each woman and her family. We at Leading Women congratulate Lisa on being recognized as a Woman of Achievement. She lives our mission and is a role model for leadership.

Rhode Island Commission on Women: There isn't anyone who could be a stronger or more adept advocate for women than Shanna Wells, director of the Rhode Island Commission on Women. Her unbridled energy and focus have enabled her to bring together individuals and organizations to achieve a common purpose. Shanna is an effective leader, who has made a difference for women and girls in Rhode Island.

Rhode Island Council for Muslim Advancement: On behalf of the Rhode Island Council for Muslim Advancement and the Rhode Island Muslim community at large, we proudly congratulate Kathleen Taylor for this prestigious award. Her courage and relentless dedication in taking a stand against domestic violence within our community have resulted in the establishment of the Healthy Families Initiative, a program created to offer anti-abuse intervention and prevention resources/services that will help foster healthier Muslim families.

RPM Voices of RI: Our Dear Clarice LaVerne Thompson: Your friends, family and community rejoice in celebrating you. Thanks for the music and culture you bring to so many lives. Love and gratitude for your being you!

The Met Center: The Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center salutes Paige Clausius-Parks and all Women of Achievement. We support Paige and her work in speaking up for the equality of marginalized people and her advocacy for building the power of one's own truth and voice. Each day, The Met Center community works to educate and empower youth through relentless commitment to student-centered learning and personal growth.

Until the Violence STOPS: Providence: A volunteer organization consisting of passionate activists working to

end violence against women and girls, the Providence Pussy Posse coordinates the annual Until the Violence STOPS: Providence festival each spring. Part of the international V-Day movement started by playwright Eve Ensler, we support organizations around Rhode Island that help women and girls affected by violence. Want to get involved? Log on to www.peaceprovidence.com.

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CRM Modular Homes: Construction & Rehabilitation Inc., CRM Modular Homes, 2143 Hartford Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919, (401) 339-4903, Contact: Carol O'Donnell. We are a full service construction company, building modular homes, apartment buildings, condos, as well as many other structures. We provide plans, estimates, insurance quotes and site building as well as interior and exterior finishing or remodeling. www.crmmodularhomes.com

Lefkowitz, Garfinkel, Champi & DeRienzo P.C. (LGC&D): LGC&D, a premier regional public accounting firm located in Providence offers a broad range of accounting services including tax planning, accounting, auditing and business consulting. We maintain a dynamic, flexible, and creative environment to further the development and success of our clients and our employees. We'd like to congratulate this year's award winners! T: (401) 421-4800, www.lgcd.com

sharing

**Big Sisters of Rhode Island
Opportunities Unlimited, Inc.
Rhode Island Black Storytellers
Rhode Island State Nurses Association
The University of Rhode Island
Woonsocket Prevention Coalition**

in kind

CROWN TROPHY of Smithfield, plaques
Park Square Florist, Inc., corsages
Deb Ruggiero, emcee
Swarovski, gifts

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca

northern rhode island



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how to:

contribute. *She Shines* welcomes letters to the editor, articles, poetry, stories, graphics, photos and calendar events. Contact us if you have an inspiring story to tell or have a suggestion of someone to be featured. Only original contributions will be considered and may be edited due to space limitations. Include contact information including name, e-mail, address and phone number. Images provided electronically must be high resolution.

submit cover art. The cover is reserved as a gallery of art in keeping with the *She Shines* theme. For consideration, send in a photo by e-mail attachment or mail. This is a wonderful opportunity for local artists to show their work. A biography is published in conjunction with the "Artist Canvas" section of *She Shines*.

advertise. Visit sheshines.org to view the advertising media kit. *She Shines* reserves the right to refuse to sell space for any advertisement the staff deems inappropriate for the publication.

receive the magazine. *She Shines* is a free publication mailed to members and friends of YWCA Northern Rhode Island. To be added to the mailing list, send in the subscription form - available online at sheshines.org. The magazine is also available at YWCA Northern Rhode Island and at various special events.

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YWCA Northern Rhode Island is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.



The YWCA recognizes, celebrates and honors 14 extraordinary women who have made Rhode Island a better place through their lives and accomplishments.

In the words of Maya Angelou, "To make a difference is not an accident, a matter of casual occurrence of the tides. People choose to make a difference."

Thank you Women of Achievement for making a difference! ✨

Very truly yours,

Deborah

Deborah L. Perry
Executive Director
YWCA Northern Rhode Island

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*The University of Rhode Island
and the URI Alumni Association
congratulate distinguished URI alumnae
Donna Walsh '71, M.A. '76
& Yvonne Freeman, M.S. '07,
recipients of the
YWCA Women of Achievement Award.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

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Tracy C. Baran
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Valerie Tutson
Karen Feldman

✨ **insert**
YWCA Northern Rhode Island
fall programs

artist
canvas



This edition of *She Shines* features the work of Providence artist, Cheryl Kirk Noll. She is an award winning illustrator of over 25 books for children. She has contributed to numerous reading series, including programs for Scholastic and Houghton-Mifflin, and works for magazines

such as *Highlights for Children* and *Calliope*.

She specializes in multicultural and historic subject matter, and has researched and illustrated stories about subjects as varied as Hmong weddings, American immigrants and micro lending in Bangladesh.

With degrees in both education and illustration, Noll currently teaches and advises for the Children's Book Illustration certificate program at the Rhode Island School of Design.

Visit www.cherylkirknoll.com, to see more of Noll's art or to schedule a school presentation.



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Black Storytellers

FUNDA means "teach and learn"
in Zulu and Kiswahili.

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CVS Caremark is committed to children, family and community. We believe that strong, healthy communities foster the greatest outcomes for us all. We applaud the many non-profits, businesses and individuals who are dedicated to these same ideals.



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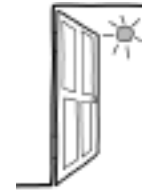
Cover artist Cheryl Kirk Noll illustrated the children's book, "A Basket of Bangles: How a Business Begins." The story explains how five women in Bangladesh take out micro loans to start small businesses. Her detailed watercolors display the village setting, the work, and the problems the women must overcome. It received the Skipping Stone Honor Award for Multicultural and International Books. Photo, art and book images courtesy of Noll.



RISNA
Rhode Island State Nurses Association

RISNA is dedicated to the promotion, advancement, and protection of nursing thereby improving the quality of and access to health care in Rhode Island.

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is an important resource for empowering women.
We salute the 2009 Women of Achievement.

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music, music, music

the pulse of life for Clarice Thompson

For Clarice L. Thompson music is more than an entertainment vehicle. She sees it as a means of acknowledging the innate dignity of all human beings. To her, music and song tell the stories of people, touch the heart, and tells the world that we are all worthy of respect and living full, positive lives.

“I seek first to understand and encourage all I come in contact with to do the same. My personal method of empowerment is through music . . . a friend of mine captured what I do in a very simple yet complex phrase . . . ‘reaching peace through music’. It is my life and pedagogical philosophy that music is at the core of our existence and that music is happening even when we do not realize it,” Thompson says.

While in her forties, Thompson completed her undergraduate degree in music at Lane College, an historically Black College in Tennessee. She then enrolled at the University of Mississippi, Oxford where she earned her masters and doctorate in music history and music theory, at age 50, making her the first Black woman to receive this degree at Mississippi.

An accomplished musicologist, educator, composer and entertainer, Thompson is the music director for Rites and Reason Theatre at Brown University. And from 2002 to 2009, she was a visiting lecturer of Africana Studies at Brown. She is an artist-in-resident at the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra & Music School and the Providence Black Repertory Company. She is the founder and director of RPM Voices of RI.

RPM Voices of RI is a choir that evolves out of a music workshop that is offered annually. Since the first workshop and chorus held in 2003, over 100 voices from the Rhode Island community ranging in age from 13-94 have come together to sing and share musically and culturally.

Jodi L. Glass, director of audiology, community activist and RPM participant says, “Clarice established a setting where through music and performance, individuals who never knew each other and most often shared highly different backgrounds, came together in a true spirit of cooperation, sharing, listening, learning and growth.” ❖❖❖

working for full equality

Shanna Wells has made a difference for women and girls in Rhode Island



Shanna Wells is the director of the Rhode Island Commission on Women. Working toward parity for women, initiatives under her leadership have included women and girls in non-traditional trades, pay equity, comparable worth, and women's financial planning.

“Shanna is a strong, reputable leader and advocate who has made a difference for women and girls in Rhode Island. She has unbridled energy and focused efforts that enable her to achieve outstanding results in advancing and empowering women toward full equity,” Linda Newton, Rhode Island Commission on Women chair says.

With almost 20 years of experience in women's issues, Wells has an excellent and strong community network. These relationships, and her skills in collaboration, gave her a formidable voice with the Rhode Island Coalition Against Human Trafficking.

Wells also assists with the facilitation of the Civil Rights Roundtable and participates in the Rhode Island Community Food Bank's Women Ending Hunger program. She uses her talents as a singer and actress to raise awareness and empower women. Her one woman performance of *Mrs. Claus in Menopause* was a fundraiser for Women Ending Hunger.

“The ability to see myself in every woman is the driving force behind all my work. I was fortunate to grow up with a consistent roof over my head, plenty of food to eat, decent schools and familial expectations that I would achieve a good education. But I also saw how traditional gender roles, sexual politics and an entrenched patriarchy impacted my life and the lives of women I knew. I believe that if you wish for peace, you must work for justice, and those who are fortunate have a moral obligation to help those still struggling,” Wells says. ❖❖❖



a hockey legend

Digit Murphy weaves female leadership into daily skills and drills

Throughout her lengthy career in collegiate women's hockey, Margaret "Digit" Murphy has time and again blended together an intense determination to succeed and blaze new trails with a passion for hockey and for those placed in her care. She is the head women's hockey coach at Brown University.

One of the winningest coaches in National Collegiate Athletic Association history (a career record of 313-200-49), and the first female to reach 300 wins, Murphy has never allowed herself to be defined by merely wins and losses. Rather, she has made it a point to set a positive example for all of the young women in her care, from the 25 collegiate varsity athletes that she takes under her wing each season to the hundreds of teens that she works with at her annual summer camps.

"While it may be easy to dismiss athletics as part of a larger

social change, Murphy has illustrated the terrific benefits that sports can provide, helping to instill a new generation of young women with the same confidence, enthusiasm, and determination that has marked Murphy's life," Isaac Goodling, Brown University sports information coordinator says.

Murphy cites one of the most significant moments in attempting to empower women came this summer when she applied for the vacant head coaching position of the Brown's men's hockey team.

"Although I was not ultimately chosen for the position, I still maintain hope that just by applying and going through the process that I will inspire other women to do the same, and that we will see female coaches on men's teams in the near future," she says. ❄️❄️❄️

devoted to the empowerment of women

Donna Walsh works to end pay disparities and encourages women to run for office



Donna Walsh first joined the fight for pay equity when she became an active member of Business and Professional Women in 1982. She was elected to the state Senate in 1996, serving as the deputy majority leader until 2002. In her six years there, she introduced pay equity awareness legislation every year and was a co-sponsor of the first bill calling for Rhode Island to eliminate sex based wage discrimination. Walsh mobilized support from other legislators, women's organizations, and the public in order to close the gap that unfairly affects women's jobs.

Although Rhode Island wasn't, and still isn't ready to join the few progressive states and cities addressing this issue, Walsh has remained firmly committed to the goal of eliminating systematic pay discrimination.

"We can gain faith knowing that pay equity is a growing national movement. States all over the country are introducing legislation to address the issue. But these few actions just do not result in enough change. At the current rate, the wage gap will not be eliminated until 2040," Walsh says.

"I have worked in the women's movement for almost 30 years on both the national and local level. I have met very few individuals as devoted to the empowerment of women - economically, politically and personally as Donna Walsh," Catherine O'Reilly Collette, retired director of women's rights at American Federation of State, City and County Employees in the Washington, DC office says.

A state representative since 2006 and a mentor to women seeking office, Walsh says, "In order to empower women, we must put more women into elected positions at all levels. Once we increase our numbers, the issues of racism, affirmative action, health care, economic advancement and other problems will be solved." ❖❖❖



believing

Lisa Bergeron uses her talents and passions to help others

As president of Leading Women of Southeastern New England, Lisa Bergeron inspires, empowers and honors the success of women leaders through a variety of leadership programs, strategic networking events and other resources. Under her leadership and in just four short years, Leading Women of Southeastern New England has grown from 250 to over 2000 members.

"The spirit that Lisa carries about her and the fire that she ignites within anyone who shares a room with her is invaluable. I contribute most if not all of the recent promotion I received to her leadership and mentoring," Tracey E. LeBeau, GTECH technology manager says.

Bergeron's area of expertise is delivering education in the areas of leadership, communication, personal brand development, networking, relationship management and negotiation.

Bergeron's determination and passion for this work was inspired by her mother. As a female stockbroker in the early 1970's, her mother faced many obstacles including sexual discrimination. However she never let these obstacles get her down. Instead it fueled her mother's determination.

"One of the greatest gifts we have been given is the opportunity to choose our attitudes. The attitude we choose profoundly affects the way you lead your life. It can hold you back or move you forward. It will shape your goals and the way in which you embrace your successes, failures, and challenges - ultimately influencing your path to finding or not finding opportunities. Believe in yourself. Recognize self-defeating attitudes. Never let failures define you or obstacles stop you. Embrace a mindset of optimism," Bergeron says. 🌟



fall session | 2009 northern rhode island

HEALTH

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

RISK FACTORS:

All are at risk of getting breast cancer, but there are some factors that affect your risk.

gender. Men can get breast cancer and account for about 1% of cases, but breast cancer is about 100 times more common among women.

age. Only about 5% of breast cancer diagnoses are in people under age 40 and approximately 18% are in their 40s, while more than three-quarters of new cases are diagnosed after age 50.

menstruation and reproductive history. Risk is increased by onset of menstruation before age 12, menopause after 50, first child after 30 or no children.

family history of breast cancer. Risk is increased by any family member with breast cancer, especially if close relatives are diagnosed before the age of 50. A first-degree relative (mother, sister, daughter) with breast cancer at any age approximately doubles the risk of breast cancer.

diet and weight. Being overweight is linked to a higher risk of breast cancer, especially after menopause. It is best to stay at a healthy weight and limit consumption of alcohol and red meats, especially those high in fat or processed.

routine exercise reduces risk. Brisk walking for 1 hour a day can reduce risk by more than 15%. The American Cancer Society recommends that you engage in 45 minutes to 1 hour of physical activity at least 5 days each week.

Source: Breast Health Resource Guide
Avon Foundation
www.avonfoundation.org

OTHER RESOURCES:

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

National Cancer Institute
www.nci.nih.gov

Office on Women's Health
www.womenshealth.gov

REGISTRATION BEGINS SEPTEMBER 28

SIX WEEK SESSION 10/12 - 11/21

Closed Columbus Day and Veterans Day.

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING CENTER

Now open for child care at 6:30am for ages 5 and under. For details on child care, pre-preschool or preschool call Mary Anne Deslauriers, Director of Early Childhood Education, at 769-7450.

CHILD CARE

INFANT/TODDLER

Our philosophy is to provide a developmentally appropriate program for children 8 weeks (6 weeks with pediatrician consent) to 3 years that focuses on a child's individual needs. We provide a safe and nurturing program, parents can rely upon throughout the year. The Early Childhood Learning Center encourages healthy social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. Licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families.

PRE-PRESCHOOL

LITTLE LEARNERS

Pre-preschool for children 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 years of age. With a consistent daily schedule modeled after our existing preschool program, children will be offered opportunities for socialization, creativity and toilet training. Daily schedule includes circle time, songs, storytime, snack, play and creative projects. 9am-noon. Two, three or five day options available. Early Birds and Lunch Bunch available. Child care option also available for the afternoon.

PRESCHOOL

PRESCHOOL

The YWCA preschool is a developmental program for children age 3 to 5. Our philosophy is reflected in a "hands on" approach to learning through interactive experiences

with peers, the environment and adults. Our most important function at the YWCA pre-school is to ensure that each child's first school experience is safe, joyful and enriching. Two, three and five-day programs with morning, afternoon or full day options available. Licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

STEPPING STONES

Unique transitional program for children whose parents are postponing Kindergarten entrance. YWCA Stepping Stones is a developmentally appropriate setting where children participate in a program designed to enhance growth and development socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically. Small class size (maximum 15) allows for much individual attention and teacher/peer involvement. Program meets Mon.-Fri., 1-4pm. Licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS

The YWCA offers extended day programs to help accommodate a parent or guardians' schedule.

EARLY BIRDS

Children enjoy morning activities in a classroom environment from 6:30-9am, then are escorted to respective classrooms. \$6/hour/day

LUNCH BUNCH

Children eat lunch in a social environment then are offered center activities from noon-1pm. Lunches are brought from home. \$6/day

AFTER PRESCHOOL CARE

Children are engaged in age-appropriate activities including gross motor play in playground from 4-6pm. \$6/hour/day.

APPLE YOUTH ENRICHMENT

The APPLE curriculum includes Academics, Physical education/recreation, Prevention, Leadership and Empowerment.

For program details call Nathan Smith, Youth Enrichment Program Coordinator, 769-7450. Inquire about tutoring services.

AFTER SCHOOL

For students attending any Woonsocket elementary school (public or Catholic) and the Woonsocket Middle School. Mon.-Fri., 2-6:30pm (3 day minimum), \$17/day. Children are bussed to YWCA from their schools, enjoy a free snack, participate in fun activities, offered homework help and special events. Builds on the strengths and values of youth by providing them with a supportive, safe and culturally diverse environment in which they can develop positive qualities for school success and a productive future. Activities geared towards fostering individual creativity and imagination and the ability to implement the child's own original ideas. New computer lab and library.

YOUTH ENRICHMENT

Our philosophy is to provide a developmentally appropriate program for children in Kindergarten to age 15. Program focuses on a youth's individual needs. We provide a safe, nurturing and enriching program, which parents can rely upon throughout the year, especially after school, school vacations and during the summer. Program encourages healthy social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. Licensed by Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families.

PARENTING PROGRAM

PARENTING

16 to 21 years old

PARENTING IN PROGRESS (PIP)

An alternative education, life skills and job training program housed at YWCA in collaboration with Woonsocket Education Department, Project RIRAL, BVCAP, Connecting for Children and Families, Young Voices and area businesses. Eligible applicants must live in Woonsocket and be pregnant or parenting young women under 21 years old. Mon.-Fri., 9am-1pm.

For details, call Deb Smith, Parenting in Progress Site Coordinator, at 769-7450.

NEXT PAGE: Activity Programs for children, youth and adults.

YOUTH ENRICHMENT SERVICES

We are there for you when school is closed. YWCA provides all day youth enrichment program for children age 6-15 when school is cancelled due to inclement weather and during school vacation. In order to participate you must register your child in advance.

We are there for you when your child needs a little extra help. The YWCA has a tutor available on Saturday to help your child succeed in the classroom. Tutor Nathan Smith is a certified teacher and has extensive experience working with elementary and middle school children.

For details on the Youth Enrichment Program, call 769-7450.

ART STUDIO



own choice. An art material fee is included in the session fee.

Missie St. Sauveur
Mon. 5:15-6:45pm \$45/5wks

Adults and Teens*

FEARLESS ART FOR ADULT BEGINNERS

Have you always itched to try painting, sketching or sculpting? Wish you knew the difference between Manet and Monet? In this class, you get an introduction to art-making, as well as a little art history, in a relaxed, non-judgmental atmosphere. No talent or experience required. Come have fun with us. You may be surprised by what you can create. An art material fee is included in the session fee. *Teens welcome if attending with adult.
Missie St. Sauveur
Mon. 7-8:30pm \$45/5wks

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

GYM PROGRAMS

All physical education classes are under the direction of Debbie Fay.

DESIGN YOUR OWN CLASS!

Any age group. Learn t-ball, floor hockey, golf, tennis, etc. Call Debbie Fay, Physical Education Director, 769-7450. Subject to time and space availability. Prices set by usage.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES DURING THE WEEK

Let Debbie Fay set up and run a party for your child. Themes: gymnastics, soccer, golf, etc. Call 769-7450 to schedule. Subject to time and space availability. Price set by usage.

Walking to 3 years old

JUMPING BEANS

Gymnastics play with parent.
Tues. 9-10am \$36/6wks
Thurs. 10-11am \$36/6wks

JUMPING BEANS GETS MESSY

One hour of gymnastics play with parent then 1/2 hour of messy activity - crafts or cooking.
Fri. 9-10:30am \$54/6wks

2 1/2 to 3 1/2 years old

Independent classes for your child (do not have to be toilet trained).

IDDY BIDDY SNACK ATTACKERS

Come run, have a snack, make a craft and

run some more.
Mon. 9-noon \$68/5wks

IDDY BIDDY SPORTY CRAFTY CHEFS

Combination of Small World, crafts, games and cooking your own lunch. Come jump and crack some eggs. Non stop action.
Wed. 9-noon \$68/5wks

SMALL WORLD I, II, III

Children offered opportunities for socialization, creativity and toilet training. Includes storytime, songs, crafts, playtime, and snack.

SMALL WORLD I

Deb Nault
Thurs. 9-10am \$18/6wks

SMALL WORLD II

Deb Nault
Thurs. 10am-noon \$36/6wks

SMALL WORLD III

Deb Nault
Fri. 9am-noon \$54/6wks

LITTLE LEARNERS

Pre-preschool for children 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 years of age. Two, three, four or five days available. See brochure page 1 for details.

3 to 5 years old

LUNCH WITH THE STARS

Come play a game of Alligator Pit or Polar Bear. One hour of active gym time followed by making your own lunch and eating with the "Stars". Enjoy some playtime. Stuffed animal characters: Dora, Clifford, Cookie Monster, Blues Clues, etc.
Mon. noon-2pm \$50/5wks

BRUNCH AND THE ARTS

Puppet play, theater, teddy bear tea or picnics, dress up play, singing - followed by a brunch prepared by the children.
Tues. noon-2pm \$60/6wks

SPORTSTASTIC

A new sport every week, socialization and lunch making for your child.
Wed. noon-2pm \$50/5wks

TUMBLING CRAFTY COOKS

Beginner gymnastics skills training combined with cooking and eating.
Thurs. noon-2pm \$60/6wks

GYMNASTIC FANTASTIC

Fantastic activity packed class. An hour of gymnastics followed by lunch, craft and playtime.
Fri. noon-2:30pm \$75/6wks

4 to 7 years old

SPORT INTRO

Introduction to numerous sports. Get a taste of various sports. See which ones you enjoy:



golf, tennis, t-ball, soccer, track/field, floor hockey, basketball, soccer, tumbling . . .
Wed. 3:30-4:30pm \$30/5wks

CHEERLEADING AND TUMBLING

Learn some cheers and tumbling skills used in cheerleading. Give me a Y, give me a W, give me a C and give me an A.
Mon. 3:30-4:30pm \$30/5wks

8 to 12 years old

CHEERLEADING AND TUMBLING

Learn some cheers and tumbling skills used in cheerleading. Give me a Y, give me a W, give me a C and give me an A.
Mon. 4:30-5:30pm \$30/5wks



12 to 18 years old

YOGA AND CONDITIONING

Yoga/stretching combined with overall workout.
Sat. 11:30am-12:45pm \$45/6wks

GYMNASTICS ACADEMY

GYMNASTICS - BASIC

3 1/2 to 5 years old

BEGINNER GYMNASTICS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

A great all around introductory gymnastics program. Preschoolers have the opportunity to advance to higher levels.
Mon. 3-4pm \$30/5wks
Fri. 3:30-4:30pm \$36/6wks

4 to 7 years old

BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE GYMNASTICS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

A great all around introductory gymnastics program. Students have the opportunity to advance to higher levels.
Tues. 5-6pm \$36/6wks
Thurs. 4:30-5:30pm \$36/6wks
Sat. 10:15-11:30am \$45/6wks

5 to 12 years old

BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE GYMNASTICS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

A great all around introductory gymnastics program. Students have the opportunity to advance to higher levels.
Mon. 4-5:15pm \$38/5wks
Fri. 4:30-5:30pm \$36/6wks
Sat. 9-10:15am \$45/6wks

ART CLASSES

New and returning students welcome. Every session, new artists and projects are covered.

5 to 10 years old

ART FOR CHILDREN

This class will introduce young students to basic color theory via fun, hands on, interactive lessons and creativity games. We'll explore a variety of materials and learn about a famous artist or two. An art material fee is included in the session fee.
Missie St. Sauveur
Fri. 5-6:30pm \$54/6wks

11 and 12 years old

ART FOR TWEENS

Call for appropriate art class placement, 769-7450. We will gladly try to accommodate.

13+ years old

ART FOR TEENS

Appropriate for a range of experience levels from those just beginning to explore art to advanced students building a portfolio. Combines theory and hand-on projects with a relaxed and social atmosphere. Each class is divided into two sections. In the first, a lesson plan that incorporates art theory, history, new materials and/or technique. During the second half, student work on guided projects of their

GYMNASTICS - CONTINUING

All classes listed below require permission from instructor for participation. Call Jennie Graham or Debbie Fay at 769-7450.

4 to 7 years old

ADVANCED PEE WEE GYMNASTICS-LEVEL I & II
Thurs. 3:30-4:30pm \$36/6wks

5 to 12 years old

ADVANCED GYMNASTICS
Tues. 3:45-5pm \$45/6wks

PRE TEAM
Sat. 11:30am-1pm \$54/6wks

COMPETITIVE TEAM
Monthly fee for all competitive teams:
One day a week \$44/month
Two days a week \$86/month
Three days a week \$100/month
Jennie Graham, Head Coach
Breonna Gentes, Assistant Coach

HOT SHOTS 4 to 9 years old
Sat. 9-11am

TEAM A 8 to 16 years old
Sat. 11am-1pm

TEAM B 8 to 16 years old
Sat. 11am-1pm

TEAM C 8 to 16 years old
Thurs. 4:15-6:30pm
Sat. 1:30-4pm

TEAM D 9 to 18 years old
Tues. 3:45-6:30pm
Fri. 4:15-6:30pm
Sat. 1:30-4pm



WELLNESS PROGRAMS

HEALTH

ENCOREplus®
ENCOREplus® is a systematic approach to women's health promotion, in particular, breast and cervical cancer education. The YWCA offers community outreach, breast and cervical health education, linkage to clinical screening services and assistance in accessing and navigating diagnostic treatment services when necessary. The YWCA also offers support during diagnosis and treatment. If you are over the age of 40 and have no

health insurance, or your insurance does not cover breast and cervical screenings every year, you may qualify for FREE services. The Rhode Island Department of Health Women's Cancer Screening Program provides a women's health exam including clinical breast and pelvic exams, Pap smear, mammogram, and follow-up services.

For more details call Joyce Dolbec, YWCA Health Consultant, at 769-7450. If hearing/speech impaired call 1-800-745-5555.

BREAST CANCER INFORMATION

The Love/Avon Army of Women provides women the life-changing opportunity to partner with the scientists who are conducting the research that will move us beyond a cure and teach us how to end breast cancer once and for all. Sign up at www.armyofwomen.org.

SMOKING CESSATION

Supportive/educational one hour meeting weekly for 8 weeks held in northern Rhode Island area. Call YWCA Health Office to register, 769-7450.

CHRONIC DISEASE SELF MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

If you have asthma, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis or another chronic disease, this FREE workshop is for you. Classes meet 2 1/2 hours for six consecutive Mondays: October 19, 26, November 2, 9, 16, 23. These afternoon classes meet from 2 to 4:30pm. You will learn: how to manage your symptoms, how to communicate effectively with your doctor, how to lessen your frustration, how to fight fatigue, how to make daily tasks easier and how to get more out of life. The self-management workshop is for anyone who has one or more chronic conditions. A friend, caregiver or relative is welcome to attend with you. They too will benefit from the problem-solving skills related to managing a chronic condition. For registration and information on Living Well Rhode Island, call Lisa Piscatelli at 769-7450.

EXERCISE

16+ years old

AEROBIC DANCE

Improve your aerobic fitness. Benefits include increase in heart health, muscular endurance, mood, energy level and a decrease in shortness of breath. Fees reflect member rates, nonmembers pay an additional \$20.
Colette Doura
Mon./Wed., 7:15-8:15pm
\$53/8wks

BELLY DANCING I

Learn exciting moves of ancient Middle Eastern art form: snake arms, figure eights, hip circles, traveling steps and shimmies. Class is for first time students or those wanting to continue with basics before moving on to more advanced skills. No previous dance experience required. Fun, supportive environment. Donia
Tues., 6:30-7:30pm \$36/6wks

BELLY DANCING II

Continue to learn and evolve in the timeless beauty of the belly dance. We will perfect the basics, along with learning new steps, undu-

lations, turns and choreographies. Class is for returning students who are ready for some more advanced moves. Introduction to veil and music theory will be covered as the session progresses. Stay fit while feeling like a goddess! Donia
Tues., 7:30-8:30pm \$36/6wks

YOGA

Hatha yoga, art of movement that achieves balance between body and mind. Promotes wellness through physical poses, breathing techniques and meditation. Helps improve strength and flexibility while reducing stress. Kathy Hopkins
Thurs., 7-8:30pm \$54/6wks

WALKING CLUB

The Walking Club begins at John Dionne Track on Cumberland Hill Road, Woonsocket. Look for Jeanne and Bev. Tues., Wed, and Fri. at 10am. Mon. and Thurs. at 6pm. Call YWCA Health Office for details, 769-7450.



EXERCISE FACILITY

17+ years old

WOMEN'S WORKOUT ROOM

Enjoy the privacy of a women's only facility with: a four stack universal machine, bikes, free weights, treadmills and showers. You must pay a \$20 instruction/processing fee and attend an introductory session in order to be eligible to use room. YWCA adult female membership required. For appointment, call Lisa Piscatelli at 769-7450.

WOMEN'S CLUBS

Y WIVES & GIRLS

The purpose of this club is to build a fellowship of women devoted to the task of enriching each member's life by building a program around education, services for others and recreation. Activities include outings, special events and service projects. Membership is open to women

30 years of age and over. Meetings are held on alternate Tuesdays at 1:30pm from September through June. Call YWCA for details, 769-7450.

APRES-MIDI

This club provides opportunities for both single and married women to share activities, information and to gain new friendships. Activities include guest speakers, outings, restaurant tours, luncheons and demonstrations. Membership is open to women 30 years of age and over. Meetings are held on alternate Thursdays at 1:30pm from September through June. Call YWCA for details, 769-7450.

VOLLEYBALL LEAGUES

All volleyball leagues are under the direction of Debbie Fay, Physical Education Director. Teams picked by draft. Come prepared to play on organizational nights. Dates subject to change due to weather or other uncontrollable circumstances. To verify times/dates, call Debbie Fay at 769-7450.

Volleyball pick-up games for YWCA members. Front desk will collect names and phone number of players interested. Night and time will be decided by players availability. \$5 each week you play.

INTERMEDIATE MIXED CO-ED

Sundays: Organizational night will be held November 1, 6-8pm. League play begins November 8. Bring in your own teams. If you don't have a team, we will help you get on one. \$112/20 wks & playoffs/plus membership fee May pay in two installments.

POWER CO-ED JOHN PIETROPAOLI LEAGUE

Tuesdays: Advanced players.
\$56/10 wks & playoffs/plus membership fee

INTERMEDIATE CO-ED

Wednesdays: Intermediate or above players.
\$56/10 wks & playoffs/plus membership fee



MINORITY HEALTH PROMOTION CENTER

YWCA Northern Rhode Island has been designated as a Minority Health Promotion Center by the Rhode Island Department of Health. It is the only organization in northern Rhode Island to receive such a designation. Our Association develops and implements health information, health education and risk reduction activities that improve the quality of life and eliminate health disparities for Woonsocket's racial and ethnic populations.

Call the YWCA Health Office for more information, 769-7450.

YWCA NORTHERN RHODE ISLAND

CONTACT US

514 Blackstone Street
Woonsocket, RI 02895
T: 401-769-7450
F: 401-769-7454
www.ywcanri.org

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

6 to 16 years \$12.00
17 to 64 years \$22.00
65 and over \$17.00

Children under 6 must be covered by a parent or guardian membership. Membership fees are not refundable or deductible as a charitable contribution. Reduced rates are available in some classes for members 65 and over. All classes and activities are open to both sexes unless otherwise indicated in the class description. A member may use the membership card at all other YWCAs in the USA.

YWCA membership, paid yearly, is required for participation in all programming except as otherwise indicated. Special non-member fees are available for some adult programs. Men and boys are welcome as associates. As a YWCA member, you have access to:

- low cost, innovative programs
- special membership events
- volunteer opportunities
- use of YWCA facilities nationwide
- membership in the oldest, largest women's movement in the nation

HOURS

Monday to Thursday, 9am-9pm
Friday 9am-6:30pm, Saturday 9am-4:30pm
Monday to Friday, open for child care at 6:30am for ages 5 and under.

TOURS

Are you new to YWCA? Call for more information or to schedule a tour, 769-7450.

SCHEDULE

Classes run in consecutive sessions during the school year with a new schedule for summer.

ROOM RENTALS

Room rentals are available for events. Contact YWCA for details, 769-7450.

STORM POLICY

Please listen to radio stations WOON 1240AM or WNRI 1380AM for YWCA cancellations, or watch Channel 10 & 12 closing announcements. School system delays, early dismissals, and professional days do not apply to YWCA schedule.

EVENTS

- **September 21 - October 2, Fall Fundraiser:** Hand crafted pure natural beeswax candles - Big Dipper Wax Works. Call YWCA for details, 769-7450.
- **September 30, October 21, November 18, Women's Wellness Series:** All sessions

begin at 6:30pm. Presented by Cumberland Chiropractic's Dr. Natalya Kascheef. Session 1: What is Scoliosis and How is it Addressed? Session 2: Chronic Back Injury and the Chiropractic Care. Session 3: Straighten Up Program for Optimal Wellness. For details, call YWCA Health Office at 769-7450.

- **October 7, H1N1 Flu - Are you at risk?:** Community Conversation for providers and the public at YWCA Northern Rhode Island from 12:15 to 1:15pm. You are welcome to bring your lunch. Free registration, 769-7450.
- **October 14 - 16, New England Regional Minority Health Conference:** Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities by 2010. Visit www.nermhc.com for registration details.
- **October 15, The Big C - Living Fully, Living Healthy:** Gallery reception with health resources and referrals from 5 to 9pm. Materials on breast health: healthy living choices, programs, services and treatment options. URI Providence Campus, 80 Washington Street. For details, call YWCA Health Office at 769-7450.
- **October 18 - 24, YWCA Week Without Violence:** Say enough to all forms of violence, www.ywcaweekwithoutviolence.org.
- **October 22, 4th Annual Breast Health Luncheon.** 10:30am at the Women & Infants Office, 2168 Diamond Hill Road, Woonsocket. Sponsored by Women & Infants and YWCA Northern Rhode Island. Reservations required. Call 767-2122.

SHE SHINES™

2009 Metcalf Award for Diversity in the Media

Published by YWCA Northern Rhode Island, *She Shines* is a magazine celebrating the aspirations and accomplishments of women. To receive a free subscription or reserve advertising space, contact Lisa Piscatelli at 769-7450. www.sheshines.org

NOTABLE

- Deborah L. Perry, executive director, completed training at the Community Leadership Institute for Childhood Obesity Prevention at Tufts University.
- Nathan Smith, youth enrichment program coordinator, completed Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training's B.E.S.T. Youth Worker Certificate.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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YWCA MISSION

The YWCA is dedicated to
eliminating racism, empowering women and
promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

FALL II 2009

ADVOCACY

eliminating racism empowering women

Why are we still having the conversation about women's rights and civil rights? It's a legitimate question. After all, much of the last century was dedicated to promoting the civil liberties of women and people of color. The women's suffrage movement culminated in the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920. Then there was the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Title IX - gender equity in academics and athletics, and the Violence Against Women Act.

So why are we still having this conversation? Because the last 40 years have taught us that you have to do more than legislate equality. It's not enough to change the laws. You have to change people's hearts. And that's not something that happens quickly or easily.

Women still earn only three-quarters of what their male counterparts make. African Americans earn only two-thirds the salary of equally skilled whites. We could spend all day listing the statistics that demonstrate where problems still exist, but we'd rather continue the progress toward true equality.

YWCA Northern Rhode Island is a nonprofit organization that thrives on the help and generosity of many individuals and corporations who are willing to make a difference in someone else's life.

Become a member. Participate in programs. Volunteer. Advocate. Donate. Help us, help others. Join us in eliminating racism and empowering women.

We're making a difference.

a catalyst for improved access and better health

Yvonne Freeman helps vulnerable populations



In 1999, Yvonne Freeman was pregnant with her fourth child and homeless with no family support. The stress of being homeless caused her to deliver her baby early. The baby was very sick and needed a great deal of care. Freeman received support from the neonatal intensive care unit nurses at Women & Infants Hospital, which in turn sparked her interest in becoming a nurse so that she could give back to the community by supporting individuals that needed help.

“All of the obstacles that I faced were issues that mainly affected women. What I went through was not an isolated issue. Women across the nation face similar if not tougher problems. Once I graduated from nursing school, I chose to specialize in women’s health nursing so that I could be part of the solution.”

Freeman works in a supervisory role in the case management department of Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island. She works with staff to help manage and coordinate quality care for health plan members.

In her personal time, Freeman is active in the community by educating and empowering girls and young women in their wellness and health care. Once a month she facilitates discussions with teen girls from different neighborhoods in Providence to empower them to make positive life decisions. Discussions include goal setting for neighborhood change, self esteem building to be able to stand up and out against women’s discrimination, developing healthy relationships socially and personally, safe sexual health, being responsible and exercising community leadership.

Freeman is also a certified diabetes educator and the president of the Rhode Island Black Nurses Association.

Dolores Burke, manager of case management, Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island says, “Yvonne’s personal life experiences and her work in the community give her a perspective on her work that is both unique and powerful.”

a force for change

Paige Clausius-Parks encourages everyone to speak for equality



Throughout her life, Paige Clausius-Parks has learned to find the power of living in the margins. As a young African-American lesbian woman, she often had to prove to herself the value of her voice, and not back down in her effort to be heard and understood.

While an undergraduate student at Providence College, Clausius-Parks organized a small handful of peers to develop the campus' first gay-straight alliance named SHEPARD (Stopping Homophobia, Eliminating Prejudices and Restoring Dignity).

She continued her education and activism at Harvard University where she obtained a masters degree in education.

Her love of change and direct action brought her to Youth Pride, where she served as the state's coordinator of school based programming for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender diversity. Under her leadership the program trained students and educators in fifteen school districts, established a network of like-minded educators, developed policy recommendations and began what is now the Rhode Island Gay Straight Alliance Coalition.

“With each step along the way I have learned the power of one’s own voice. The progress I have witnessed, however, does not mislead me to believe the work is over. To all other women working towards dignity for all I advise to always remember your truth and voice is what makes a difference, one person at a time,” Clausius-Parks says.

Clausius-Parks is co-founder of the company, inFocus, which works with a wide range of clients providing on and off site assistance and social marketing for successful inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees and customers. And she is a teacher and advisor at The Met Center in Providence.

“Paige has a profound inner strength and giving spirit. She brings joy, empowerment and great knowledge to her advisory students and brings the same to her colleagues and the broader Met community. She is a voice for women and a force of change,” Loriana De Crescenzo, The Met Center director of development and communications says. ❖❖❖

trusting divine guidance

Kathleen Taylor is helping to demystify the stigma of domestic violence



Kathleen Taylor and her 6-year-old daughter, Sakeena Khan at the Islamic Center of Rhode Island, Masjid al-Kareem. "I am a strong woman . . . I deserve to be treated with respect, honor and dignity . . . my daughter can now grow up in an abusive-free home." - excerpt from Taylor's dedication to all survivors of domestic violence. Taylor's poem, *I Am a Strong Woman*, is online at www.ricma.org.

Kathleen A. Taylor is the founder and co-chair of Healthy Families Initiative, a newly formed grassroots movement within the Rhode Island Muslim community to offer intervention and prevention services to Muslims who may be experiencing domestic violence within their homes. Although in its infancy, the initiative has been gaining tremendous momentum as a resource hub for services available to those experiencing domestic violence in the Muslim community.

"I knew creating such an initiative would not be easy: it would mean forging a new path through a typically patriarchal society, and speaking about a subject that many within the community considered taboo - the relationship between a husband and wife. My efforts would either be accepted or rejected, and I ran the risk of being shunned from the community. But these were risks I was willing to take," she says.

Taylor says she has never been fearful of walking to the beat of her own heart, listening to her intuition and of taking a leap of faith.

"Ms. Taylor is a remarkable woman. As a survivor of domestic violence, she has first hand knowledge of the traumatic experiences battered women face. As a psychiatrist, I have witnessed these women bear the psychological scars of trauma for the rest of their lives; often leaving them incapacitated. Instead of just giving up or falling into the routine of learned helplessness, Ms. Taylor decided to not only stand up against violence but also become a voice for women who do not have a voice of their own," Kazi M. Salahuddin, child, adolescent and adult psychiatrist at The Providence Center and clinical assistant professor of psychiatry at the Brown University School of Medicine says.

"Often times, we need to trust our divine guidance blindly and whole heartedly in order to see and feel positive results. If you can achieve this, then the lives you touch may be influenced in profound ways," Taylor says.





passionate woman

Nancy Rafi spreads the message of peace and healing

Nancy Rafi is committed to ending violence against women and girls. Over the years she has created many events, which raise awareness and funds for local non-profit and volunteer organizations. “I have come to my work as a survivor,” she says.

Through her events company Rafi Productions, she produces theatrical and arts events to raise funds for local non-profit agencies. Her initiatives are numerous and include: An Afternoon with Gloria Steinem, 2008 & 2009 Until the Violence STOPS: Providence and The Silent Witness Project of Rhode Island. She is also executive director and founder of the Rhode Island Crisis Assistance Center.

Rafi has worked closely with Eve Ensler, the playwright of The Vagina Monologues, in various capacities including Ensler’s

volunteer coordinator for the tenth anniversary of The Vagina Monologues held at the Superdome in New Orleans. Over 40,000 people attended the event.

“Nancy understands that each woman has her own journey to peace and healing. So Nancy is a safe haven for those who want to disclose and heal, and she is a gentle shawl of empathy for those not yet ready to disclose,” Kim M. Baker, Roger Williams University School of Law professor and writing specialist says.

Rafi says, “The best advise I can give any woman is to love yourself as much as you love the other women in your life - your mother, sister, aunt or daughter. Wish for yourself all of the wonderful things that you wish for them because you too deserve to live a happy, healthy and violence free life.”



above and beyond the call of duty

Ana Giron promotes justice for victims of crime

Ana Giron recalls a time assisting a young woman at trial who had been a victim of sexual assault. During the trial the young woman had to watch a tape depicting her being raped by three men. Upon seeing the tape, the woman asked for a break, left the courtroom and became ill. “Court was set to resume and I had only five minutes to help her compose herself. Somehow I was able to convince her that she had done nothing wrong and stabilized her enough to go back into the courtroom to continue her testimony. I didn’t do anything miraculous and I didn’t have any magic words, but it made a world of difference that someone cared enough, didn’t judge her and believed that she deserved better,” Giron says.

Having worked in the criminal justice system for two decades, Giron, director of the Victim Services Unit at the Department of Attorney General, recognizes that the focus of our great, yet imperfect justice system is geared toward preserving defendant’s rights, while the person whose life is most affected by the actions of the defendant tends to be the one most forgotten in the eyes of the law.

“To be able to bring human compassion and understanding to

someone who’s thrown into this process and to empower someone who feels powerless, and to give someone back their sense of dignity - that’s what truly inspires me,” Giron says.

In addition to informing victims of their rights, assisting them in court, and helping them better understand and participate in the legal process, Giron also serves as a conduit between the Attorney General’s office and Dominican immigrants. As the daughter of Dominican immigrants, Giron utilizes her own experience to break down cultural barriers and thereby deliver tremendous assistance to this particular segment of the population. She has provided much needed cultural insight to various members of the law enforcement community, resulting in a better understanding of the issues that confront Rhode Island’s Hispanic population.

“Simply stated, Ana Giron consistently demonstrates a willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty in promoting justice for the victims of crime, never seeking recognition she so richly deserves,” Patrick C. Lynch, attorney general for The State of Rhode Island says. ❖❖❖

committed to service

Tracy Baran is helping others realize their inner strength and potential



A successful attorney with Partridge Snow & Hahn, Tracy C. Baran is committed to empowering women by creating and participating in programs, initiatives and activities which focus on women's professional and personal development, and which eliminate barriers to success and personal fulfillment.

An active member of the Rhode Island Women's Bar Association, Baran helped create a mentoring committee, which has had an impact on established female practitioners and new lawyers alike.

"As a young female lawyer in what is still predominantly a 'man's profession,' having someone send the elevator back down is invaluable. Tracy is making that happen for so many young women," Attorney Aileen L. Sprague says.

Baran's involvement with young women is not limited to the Bar Association. She is committed to serving those in need, mentoring young women at St. Mary's Home for Children. And through The Junior League of Rhode Island, she works to effect change and improve the lives of women and children in the community.

Baran was honored as one of the "40 Magical Women We Admire" at the Big Sisters of Rhode Island Abracadabra Ball, and received the Unsung Hero Award in 2008 from the West Elmwood Development Corporation.

Baran says, "Believe in what you do; otherwise you will never be fulfilled. Focus your efforts on projects, work, community activities that you truly believe in and whose mission you believe in. When you believe in the mission and the people involved in your work and community activities, you realize that the time commitment, the stress and the craziness of day-to-day activity is worth it because you are working towards something that makes a difference." ❖❖❖



recognizing inherent strength in every group

Mary-Kim Arnold is drawn to addressing social inequalities

Mary-Kim Arnold is driven by a deep conviction that we can be more, do more and hope for more than what we're able to see at any particular moment.

She has served as the board president of the International Charter School, vice president of New Urban Arts, and chair of the Women's Fund of Rhode Island. She received both a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Brown University. A writer, Arnold spent several years teaching creative writing and literature at Brown, the Rhode Island School of Design and at Wheaton College.

Arnold, the executive director of the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, works diligently to promote the public humanities so that all Rhode Islanders can explore and discuss respectfully how the past impacts current times in an effort to influence the future.

"Mary-Kim is not afraid to be bold and innovative in her efforts to better the lives of others and pursue equality and equity for all. She is committed to diversity and social change and extremely involved in community activities that promote freedom, justice and cultural understanding," Kristin C. Sawyer, Rhode Island Council for the Humanities communications and development director says.

Arnold looks at her work and volunteer involvement through the lens of recognizing the inherent strengths and resources in every group, community, culture or population - and that when we overlook them (or try to squelch them) it is at our own peril. She believes that everyone has gifts to share; everyone has value.

"As women, we have to get better at trusting our own resources and our own voices. If we can be true to those core strengths, we will not be steered wrong," she says. ❖❖❖

honoring and respecting the experience of all people

Valerie Tutson celebrates people's culture and identity through storytelling



Valerie Tutson believes wholeheartedly in using stories to educate, heal, empower and honor. She is unwavering in her belief that through this work, communities can be built, hate and fear can be overcome and individuals can achieve their highest potential.

She often elects to share powerful stories of African captive history. Stories most Americans, regardless of background, know little about. Tutson's stories are usually regarding family and community, choices and empowerment, as well as the detrimental impacts of inequity, abuse, and oppression, based on race, gender, class and economic status.

"In my work as a storyteller I am committed to building community. I use stories to help people to learn about themselves and others. When you hear your own story, the stories of women, the stories of women of color you can't help but feel empowered," Tutson says.

Tutson is a graduate of Brown University, with a self-designed major "Storytelling As a Communications Art," and a masters in theatre. Since 1991, she has traveled the country and world teaching storytelling, while gathering and sharing stories and songs. She is a founding member and volunteer executive director of the Rhode Island Black Storytellers, and director of FUNDA FEST: An Annual Celebration of Black Storytelling.

Tutson is a recipient of the Rhode Island Foundation's 2009 non-profit leaders fellowship award. And for years, Tutson hosted Cultural Tapestry, an award winning show for Cox 3, which provided a forum for underrepresented communities to share their own experience on TV.

"When Valerie gets up on stage she may or may not know exactly what performance she intends to give, but a bit of interaction with her audience often helps her make this decision. Once a decision is made, Valerie tends to take a moment to transform into character and we witness this through her taking a deep breath and closing her eyes. When she opens her eyes the transformation is complete and we are drawn into this incredible, magical place that only the most gifted storytellers can bring to us," Catalina Martinez, Rhode Island Black Storytellers board member says. ❖❖❖



a love of young people - their energy, beauty and raw potential

Karen Feldman inspires young leaders

Karen Feldman is co-director of Young Voices, a Rhode Island organization that transforms urban youth into powerful advocates. She brings more than 20 years of experience in the field of youth leadership development. Young Voices engages young people from across the state in various efforts to impact public education policy at the district and state level.

She is the founder and former executive director of Youth in Action. Under her leadership, Youth in Action grew from just an idea into one of the most recognized youth organization in Rhode Island.

"I met Karen over eight years ago when I was 14 years old. At the time she was the executive director of an organization in Providence called Youth in Action. What made Youth in Action unique was that the organization was focused on youth in leadership roles at every step of the way. Whether it was having youth on the Board of Directors and having a majority of the seats or having youth processing time sheets, it was the one place that I ever went to where young people were to be seen and heard. Where young people's voices actually mattered," Chace Baptista, Young Voices co-director says.

Feldman, who earned Leadership Rhode Island's prestigious David Sweet Award for her achievements, has a bachelor's degree from Wellesley College and a master's degree from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Through her work with Young Voices, an education action team consisting of youth has been formed and is gaining traction on one of its major goals: to ensure excellent teaching is rewarded and to hold all educators accountable to quality teaching.

"In our effort we are working for systemic change of all the schools, which in its nature is eliminating racism, since it's pretty clear that it's the youth of color who are getting short-changed out of the education they deserve . . . that is just unacceptable to me," Feldman says. ❖❖❖

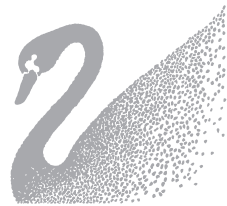
The helping hands presentation thanks a special friend of YWCA Northern Rhode Island. Karen Feldman and Young Voices extends expertise to YWCA's collaborative Parenting in Progress program, an alternative education program for parenting and pregnant young women.

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